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Russell L. Robbins
Iowa State College

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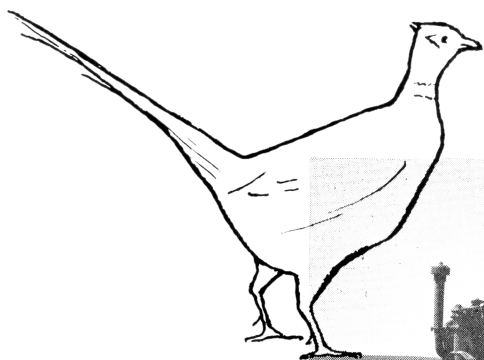


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FLUSHING BAR

SAVES PHEASANTS

by Russell L. Robbins

MANY nesting pheasant hens are killed or injured by tractor mowers in Iowa each year during the cutting of the first crop of hay. This cutting usually takes place when pheasant nesting is at its peak. And the most important problem in management of the ring-necked pheasant within Iowa's primary range is the loss in production suffered during the nesting season.

Some idea of the extent of this loss is indicated by studies conducted by the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit of Iowa State College in Winnebago County during the spring and summer of 1953. Of an estimated 78 hen pheasants on the 1,520-acre study area, 33 were killed or injured during the first hay cutting. Thus, hay mowing was responsible for killing or crippling 42 percent of the hen pheasant population. This loss can be reduced by using a game flushing bar when mowing.

Old Idea, New Bar

The idea of using a flushing bar certainly isn't new. Many bars were designed and used on horse-drawn mowers, but they weren't strong enough to be adapted to

modern, high-speed tractor mowers.

Now an all-metal flushing bar has been designed and tested in Ohio. The bar is constructed so that it may be mounted on tractors in front of the cutter bar. Weights attached to steel cables hanging from the bar flush hen pheasants before they're hit by the mower.

This flushing bar reduced mortality by about 45 percent when tested in Ohio. During the spring and summer of 1953, the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit tested this bar in north-central Iowa on 10 alfalfa and red clover fields, comprising 110 acres. Here,

the bar reduced mortality by about 35 percent—a decided saving of hen pheasants.

Plans Available

The fact that the Ohio flushing bar can be quickly and easily attached to a tractor plus the fact that it doesn't interfere with mowing should make the bar generally acceptable for farm use. Free plans for the Ohio flushing bar (see photo with title of article) may be obtained from the State Conservation Commission, East Seventh and Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa.



RUSSELL L. ROBBINS is a graduate assistant in zoology and entomology, Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit.

Many incidents like this can be prevented by using a flushing bar as described in this article. Free plans are available from the State Conservation Commission, East Seventh and Court, Des Moines, Iowa.